

REMARKS

The Examiner has rejected claims 1 through 29 under 35 U.S.C. §102 as allegedly being anticipated by the disclosures in the Herregods et al. reference. In particular, the Examiner has pointed out specific portions of the disclosures for each element of independent claim 1. For the rejections of other independent claims 11 and 21, the Examiner has stated that the same rejection basis is applicable since he asserted that independent claims 11 and 21 are identical to independent claim 1. For the above rejection bases, the Applicant has amended each of independent claims 1, 11 and 21 to further clarify the patentable features of the current invention. The Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider the pending rejections in view of the above claim amendments and the following remarks.

The current invention as claimed in the newly amended independent claims requires the on-the-fly selection of "a selected portion." Newly amended independent claims 1, 11 and 21 each explicitly recite "selecting a portion of the single overlapping image ... while the single overlapping image is being displayed." Namely, the user selects a particular portion to be later processed in the combined overlapping image while the single image is displayed to the user.

Furthermore, newly amended independent claims 1, 11 and 21 each explicitly recite "simultaneously image processing the selected portion ... based upon the selected process while the single overlapping image is being displayed." In other words, the user sees the process being performed on the selected portion while the single combined image is displayed. The selected portion of the combined image data is simultaneously processed while the user visually confirms the effect of the selected process with the displayed single overlapping image.

In contrast to the above explicitly recited patentable features, the Herregods et al. reference discloses a variable data print technology. In general, the variable data print technology includes a variable data file for storing page specific information and a master data file for storing information on the background and the positional data for the variable data. (See lines 26 through 29, lines 39 through 54 in column 8). After the positions of the variable data are determined by the user, a variable data merger program is invoked to combine the content of the variable data file and the master data file to generate desired outputs. Although the user can specify a number of copies and a paper size in generating outputs, any process to be performed on the specific image data must be predetermined prior to the merger process. In other words, the user of the variable data print technology as disclosed by the Herregods et al. reference cannot see on the display how the process interacts with the selected portion of the single combined image.

Based upon the above patentable distinctions, the Herregods et al. reference fails to anticipate each of the newly amended independent claims. Dependent claims 2 through 10, 12 through 20 and 22 through 29 ultimately depend from newly amended independent claim 1, 11 or 21 and incorporate the above patentable features of the current invention. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully submits to the Examiner that the pending rejection of claims 1 through 29 under the section 102 should be withdrawn.

The above claim amendments have been supported by the original disclosures of the current application. The disclosures at lines 4 through 30 on page 6 support the new amendment for "selecting a portion of the single overlapping image ... while the single overlapping image is being displayed." Similarly, exemplary disclosures at lines 20 through 32 on page 10 and lines 1 through 7 on page 11 support the new amendment for "simultaneously image processing the selected portion ... based upon the selected process while the single overlapping image is being displayed."

Lastly, the Examiner is requested to consider the following remarks that would limit the citation of the Herregods et al. reference under 35 U.S.C. §103. As already discussed above, the Herregods et al. reference discloses a variable data print technology whose major purpose is to reduce the memory requirement for the files to be stored by recycling the page specific image data. In sharp contrast to this recycling idea, the current invention as explicitly recited in newly amended claims 1, 11 and 21 is related to a selected portion and simultaneous processing of the selected portion of the combined image data while the user visually confirms the effect of the selected process with the displayed single overlapping image. Because of the major difference in motivation and purpose, it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the relevant art to provide the patentable features of the current invention based upon the disclosures of the Herregods et al. reference. For the above reason, the Applicant respectfully submits the Examiner not to use the above cited reference under the section 103.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request a favorable Office Action so indicating.

Respectfully submitted,



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